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Subject: Fragments of Instruction.

PLYMOUTH PULPIT:

A Weekly Publication

OF

SERMONS

PREACHED BY

HENRY WARD BEECHER.



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HENRY WARD BEECHER.

PLYMOUTH PULPIT.

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- I. WATCHFULNESS.
- II. PAUL AND DEMETRIUS.
- III. CONSOLATIONS OF THE SUFFERING OF CHRIST.
- IV. TREASURE THAT CANNOT BE STOLEN.
- V. BEARING, BUT NOT OVERBORNE.
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- VIII. FAULTS.
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- XVI. INHERITANCE OF THE MEER.
- XVII. MEMORIALS OF DIVINE MERCY.
- XVIII. THE VICTORIOUS POWER OF FAITH.

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FRAGMENTS OF INSTRUCTION.

"When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost."—JNO. VI. 12.

This is a part of one of those miracles of the Master, by which, upon occasion, when the multitude lacked food and were faint, he multiplied the loaf in a marvelous way, and gave to the necessities of them all. When they had all fed, and were set, he directed his disciples to gather up the fragments; and for this reason—"that nothing be lost." They took up "twelve baskets" full. The word in the original signifies that kind of basket in which the Jews were accustomed to carry with them their provision. For the Jews, in traveling, for fear that they would be defiled in passing through peoples or nations that were not sanctified, took their provision with them in little baskets. So they were not very large. And the multiplication of the loaf was staid very nearly at the point at which the appetite of the multitude was staid. Yet, there was a little left; and that little was to be gathered up, that nothing should be thrown away or lost.

I might, from this, discourse upon the propriety of economy and frugality; though that is not my purpose to-night, except incidentally. It is strictly in the line of this, to spiritualize it, and to gather up the fragments of truth, which is everywhere represented as bread upon which the soul feeds.

In the administration of the Gospel the minister is obliged to preach upon many stately topics, to discuss many wide-reaching principles, to bring forward doctrines in their more important applications both to the life within and to external duties. There are certain massive themes upon which he dwells, and dwells fitly. There are, however, a great many fragments, any one of which, perhaps, is not large enough for a whole discourse, but which ought not to be lost—a great many themes; a great many truths; a great many minor applications of truths; and it is to gather up some of these that I shall speak familiarly to you to-night, as I have on not a few occasions before, addressing my remarks particularly to the young.

There are a great many themes which ought to be taught the young in the family, and which are better taught in every Christian and well-ordered family, because there they are not only taught, but enforced by drill—and all teaching should have drill accompanying it, if possible. Above all other places, the Christian household is a comprehensive school, and it is a school that teaches that which only love can best teach, and which a mother and a father, above all others, have the patience to teach, without reproach, without weariness, and without any other reward than the well-doing of the pupil.

If the family does not teach the things of which I shall speak, then the school should. But we are peculiarly situated in this congregation. There are in these cities thousands (and of these thousands hundreds come here from Sabbath to Sabbath) for whom there is no parents' voice; who are thrown out of the family; many of whom never were blessed with a Christian-household instruction; many of whom have long since left the parental roof. And never have they derived much ethical instruction from schools. The merest rudiments of learning—and those perhaps in the harshest and severest way—have they received. There are hundreds that come within the sound of my voice every year who really have had nobody to befriend them, and to say to them what a parent should say, or what a kind and affectionate teacher should say. And though nobody can make up the deficiency, a pastor may do something toward it. It is my wish, therefore, to-night, to introduce some topics which should be taught in the family, or in the school, but which, perhaps, may be somewhat taught here—at least so far as to be better than nothing.

Let me remind you, before proceeding further, that manhood is the supreme end of our life. It has often been the theme on which I have dwelt, that we are not, in this world, so much to seek honor and wealth, as, by the acquisition of these things, to seek an end beyond them—namely, a large and true manhood. Considered even in its secular relations, that is the most important end of life; and considered in its spiritual and eternal relations, it is the great end which we are to seek. Whatever may be the methods by which we are developing our duty and our life, the thing which we should have ultimately in view, is manhood in Christ Jesus.

This must be chiefly the result of what you do in early life. The habits which you form; the opinions which you embrace; the society into which you throw yourself; the tastes which grow up in you—these will modify your whole life, and probably will control it. For youth is, in the economy of providence, that plastic period in which everything takes shape easily, and then sets. As it is with lime that is meant to be set in water, or as it is with plaster of Paris which is

meant to be set out of water, which takes but a little time before it becomes solid and hard, so that what you do with it must be done soon, or it will be past your control; thus is it with youth. That period in which men receive impressions easily is their early life; and they rapidly drift away from it; and the further they go away from it, the harder it is for them to change. If you are to be men, and men in Christ Jesus, it is of transcendent importance that you begin early.

There are a hundred small things, any one of which in itself does not seem to be of much importance when compared with themes which are often discoursed to you—those which have to do with our eternal relations—but which, taken together, amount to a great deal, and are most important in their results. Let us enumerate some of these.

One of the first things that I would say to the young, both men and women, is in the homely form of a proverb—*Every one should be willing to creep before he walks*. This does not seem to be a very important thing; and yet, it is of exceeding importance. There is hardly a young man that goes out from his father's house who does not want money before he earns it. He *does* want to walk before he can creep. There is hardly a young man that goes out into life who does not want the reputation of being smart before he is smart. There is hardly a single circle in which you see half a dozen young men, that you do not see them aping something; making believe; “putting on airs,” as the saying is. They wish to have the appearance of a bravery, a position, or something else, which they have not attained. They are not willing to creep before they walk. The very beginning of life develops a tendency in men to false appearances; to insincerity; to an estimation which is radically unmanly; to a desire to have what does not belong to them—what they have no right to claim by reason of anything that they are, or that they have been. To be without pretense; to desire to have only that which you can legitimately lay claim to, of praise, of sympathy, of reputation, of means—to have a manly pride, by which you shall be the factor of that which is in your own possession—that is thoroughly salutary. An honest manhood scorns pretense and appearances. These are the signs of unripeness, not only, but they are vicious, bad signs in a child.

How foolishly punishments are administered! Parents, if a child drops a precious piece of ware, and breaks it, whip him, although it very likely is not his fault; but they will see the child running through a course of insincerity without the slightest idea that that deserves chastisement. Faults ought not to be punished; they ought to be mildly checked and gently rebuked; but those traits, in the beginnings of life, which indicate the want of essential truth, and of true manliness, the parent should scorn, and should teach every young man and

every young maiden to scorn. Simplicity, truth, and willingness to stand just where you are until by legitimate means you can raise yourself away from that place—that is the beginning of manliness.

In moving forward in life, every one should be willing to be young before he is old. It is not expected of you that you will know or that you will have more than belongs to your time of life. You need not be ashamed because you do not know more than those of your age are expected to know. Above all, you need not be ashamed of frugality, in all its relations. The not being ashamed of just what one is, and just what one has, one's willingness to stand square and open on the real facts of his case, has saved many and many a young man, not merely from dishonor within, but from the most fatal damage without. For there are very few young persons who are willing to say, "I am poor." The young man that comes down to the city to try for life, comes with a seedy coat, or with a country cut in his coat; and he is ashamed of it. He ought to be ashamed of himself, rather! He brought the best he had, and that is good enough. If other people do not like it, that is their lookout. It is the best that he can afford; and he ought to have manliness enough to stand on his dignity, and to say to those who find fault with his dress, "You mind your affairs, and I will mind mine. This coat was good enough at home, and it is good enough here." But no, he worries, and frets, and chafes. He has seen some man's ape that had a fine coat, and he longs for one; but it is not within his power to get it except by some such process as materially damages him, his exchequer, and his prospects.

That is not all. It does not stop where it begins. Legitimately, he should put himself in such relations for support as his slender means will allow; but no, he is annoyed because he cannot take a first-class boarding house. He sees other men that are no better than he is do it; and it *galls him*, as he says. It *hurts his pride*. It is a kind of pride that ought to be hurt! That is a true pride which sides with a man's nobler nature, and not with his meaner nature. What if you have to go to a fourth or fifth rate boarding house? What if you have to board yourself? There is many a better man than you that has lived upon the loaf that he has bought from day to day. It is far better that you should stand square on your honesty and on your simplicity, and say, "I have just so much; I came here to make my living legitimately; and I will maintain my independence. If I have but a farthing, I will live on a farthing. I am not going beyond my means." Is not that manly? But is it the spirit that is usually manifested? Are not people ashamed of frugality? Do not people wish to put on a pretentious look?

Then they are obliged to follow it up. They are involved in this

and that expense. They are led on from one thing to another, till by-and-by poverty goads them to dishonesty, and they betake themselves to dishonest ways of obtaining money. It is the shame of living according to their means; it is the shame of living poorly while they are poor, and waiting for a better day when they shall come to thrift legitimately, by their own fertility and industry—it is this that has wrecked and ruined thousands and thousands of young men.

Frugality is a beautiful quality. It is a quality of which, in itself considered, no man needs to be ashamed. And I think that abroad they understand these things better than we do. I have observed many respects in which things are better abroad than at home—although it is not the fashion to think so. For instance, there men are more willing to live according to that which they really have than they are here. They are less disposed to make a show than men are among us. Here, where men are on a democratic equality, they think that if they do not live as well as everybody else does that moves in the circle to which they belong, they are thrown out, or thrown down. They do not conceive that a man's manhood depends on his inside and not his outside life.

Keep within your means if you starve. You had better go out of life by starvation, than stay in it and maintain yourself by dishonest or indirect methods. Live within your means. If you are young, and healthy, and hearty, make two things a matter of pride: *first*, that you will not live, from month to month, one farthing in debt; and *second*, that if you can only lay up one single shilling during the year, at the end of the year you will be one shilling better off than you were at the beginning.

This is a very singular thing to be talking about in the pulpit, is it not? And yet, a young man that undertakes to follow these directions will do more for his morals than I can explain to you to-night. For, where a man practices frugality and economy, and attempts to regulate his life on such a glorious pattern as that, consider what self-denial, what courage, and what independence in the midst of taunting associates, it will require.

Do you say that these are virtues of the lower order? Yes, they may be virtues of the lower order; and yet, no man can practice them under circumstances such as I have been describing without being developed in the higher graces. How patience, how ingenuity, how industry and foresight, how all the manly graces, are developed through stubborn independence and a wise frugality on the part of the young when they are beginning life!

There is no greater pleasure than for a man to know that he is independent. And it does not require wealth to enable a man to feel so.

When a man feels, "I am neither rich nor very poor, and I have the art of living within my means," he is a prince. The satisfaction and happiness of that feeling are immeasurable. And the attempt to live in a contrary way opens the door to temptations that very few are able to resist. The mere attempt to acquire a fortune will tend to drift one into gross materialism. If that were the only object of your life, it would very likely make you stingy by-and-by. Excessive frugality would work into something else. It would lay a temptation on you to amass means. And the tendency of this temptation would be to gain more and more strength.

But remember, while you are practicing economy in life, that this is only a lower form of manhood, and that you must go on beyond it. Remember that your happiness is to spring from the qualities of your own minds and hearts, and not from the external conditions which you keep up, important as these are, as moral drill-masters.

Next, you must secure, as you go, your own education. One man cannot educate another man. Every man must educate himself. The school gives him a chance; books give him a chance; teachers facilitate and help; but, after all, the man is schoolmaster as well as scholar. He is both pupil and teacher.

Many men are said to be self-taught. No man was ever taught in any other way. Do you suppose a man is a bucket to be hung on the well of knowledge and pumped full? Man is a creature that learns by the exertion of his own faculties. There are aids to learning, of various kinds; but no matter how many of these aids a man may be surrounded by, after all the learning is that which he himself acquires. And whether he is in college or out of college, in school or out of school, every man must educate himself. And in our times and our community every man has the means of doing it.

To begin at the lowest, many of you will be workers—not brain-workers, but hand-workers. You will be called to earn a livelihood by manual labor. You need not be ashamed of it; but, after all, a man ought not to work with his hands alone. He may begin in that way; but every man's hand ought to be taught to think; and every year he ought to work more with his head, and less with his hand. I do not blame any man for being a day-laborer, or a menial laborer; but I do blame a man when he is content to labor with his hand, and never aspires to anything beyond that—never makes that hand fuller, more industrious, more capable. Every young man who begins to work with his hand should put brains in the palm of that hand, and educate it, so that it shall become more and more potential. For, in this world, after all, that which ranks men is the brain that they have, the kind of brain that they have, and the power which they have in that brain.

And every year one should educate himself not only by drill and skill of hand, but also by the acquisition of ideas. Every year one should read more, and every year one should learn and do more.

Here is a very great fault, my young friends, with you. I do not blame you that you are jovial. You ought to be jovial. I do not blame you that you love pleasure. Pleasure is right if it be rational. It may be a moral excellence. I do not blame you that you are chatty and gay, and that you spend your time with great delight in youth. Youth is a time for enjoyment. I sympathize with all these things. But I *do* blame you that you live for these. I blame you that they are all you think about. If they were for the intervals; if they were, so to speak, the cushions that you put between the hard bones of duty; if they were relaxations, none more than I would praise you. But I am ashamed to see young men and maidens who spend their whole life in foolish garrulity, or in endlessly running after mere pleasure, or in courses that have not one single particle of upbuilding in them.

Consider what you ought to know. Every man, in this time of the world, and in this country, ought to have some general knowledge about his own body and mind. It is simply a disgrace for a man to live forty or fifty or sixty years and know nothing about his heart: nothing about his lungs; nothing about his brain; nothing about the laws of health; nothing about the effect upon his physical constitution of labor and rest and sleep. It is a matter that intimately concerns your whole prosperity. The means of knowledge are abundant and within the reach of all, now, and no man can be excused for being ignorant of that which concerns every one, as to how he himself is made, and what are the laws that regulate the mind and body. It used to be thought that these things were to be known only by physicians and ministers and lawyers, and perhaps a few others; but in this democratic age knowledge on these subjects is accessible to all, and should be possessed by all.

Every man ought to know something of the structure of the earth on which he dwells, and the laws that relate to it. It is ignoble in our time to be ignorant of these things. It is not a shame that a man is poor; but if a man has been rich twenty-five or thirty years, and has extensive libraries, private or public, and numerous magazines, full of knowledge, and knows nothing of the physical globe on which he dwells, and nothing of its laws, he ought to be ashamed of that.

You ought to know something of the civil polity of your own country; something of its history; something of its economies. You ought to know something of its geography, its productions, and its climate. All these things intimately concern you, and ought to concern your self-respect. Every one of you ought to be so well informed on

these subjects that a foreigner, coming here, and falling in with you, would be able to derive from you a considerably clear and full knowledge respecting matters pertaining to your country. How many of you could give him the information? How many of you know much about the early settlement of this country? How many of you know about the immigrations that have taken place, and about the classes of immigrants that there have been? How many of you can tell the causes of the great Revolutionary struggle, or the principles that were involved in that struggle, or its principal features? How many of you can give anything like a consecutive history of the events that have taken place in the country from that time to this? How many of you can take up the distinctive American ideas and doctrines, as distinguished from monarchical ideas and doctrines? How many of you can give the geography of more than perhaps your own State and one or two adjoining States? How many of you can give any considerable idea of the climate North and South, East and West? How many of you can give anything like a complete statement of the productions of this great country? Yet it is your country, and you ought to be ashamed not to be more or less acquainted with these things. They belong to general knowledge; and they ought to be to some extent familiar to every young man, not only, but to every young maiden. For it is a part of woman's rights to be intelligent. That which young men ought to know, young women ought to know; and that which a young woman ought not to know, a young man ought not to know.

We ought to be acquainted, not alone with our own country, but, in some measure, with other countries. If we would well understand our own land, we must have some points of comparison between it and other lands. We ought to understand not only the history of our own race, but the history of mankind. The great national peculiarities; the principal epochs of civilization; the important features of history, we ought to be familiar with. And these things are easily learned. They require but comparatively little study, so have the facilities multiplied in these respects.

We ought to understand the principal elements of science; for in our day science is the substratum of life. We ought to understand the political economy of our country. We ought to understand the drift of the events of the day in which we live. All these things are within the reach of the young, if they are only hungry for knowledge; and if they do not know these things, it is because they prefer other things. See how eagerly they betake themselves to the most frivolous reading, if they read at all.

A busy man has a right to amusement, and nobody else has. A

very earnest, intense, sober man has a right to wit and mirth. That is his privilege. But a man that twitters and laughs all the time is a fool. A man that is bent on the acquisition of fact, and of principle, and of knowledge, has a right to unbend, and to read sporting papers, even—if they are decent. And certainly funny papers are not to be disallowed. There is much in them that may do a man good, as a relaxation—as an alternative. But it is painful and sickening to see a young man who makes the Sunday morning journal his classics; who studies all the things he knows out of a fifth-class trashy newspaper; who knows something about the horses that run, something about gambling saloons, and a good deal about drinking saloons, and a good deal about scandal; who reads papers that minister to his morbid appetites, to his lower passions, to the meanest parts of his nature, feculent, dripping, reeking with things that are low and unmanly. Is it not shameful for a man to give his time to reading and glozing over such contemptible stuff? Ought not a man to be ashamed to let all the great and noble themes of true secular knowledge go past him unheeded and unexplored, and spend his leisure in these miserable communings of miserable men with the most miserable parts of themselves.

When I go to the libraries and ask what are the books that are most drawn out, the information which I receive is not, I am sorry to say, creditable to the character of the young. They do not read histories. They do not read biographies. They do not read travels. They do not read scientific works. There are fifty novels taken out, where there is one solid and substantial work drawn. I have not a word to say against novels. I believe in them. I think that if they are good they are useful. I believe that they are no more to be disallowed than any other part of literature. They can be made to serve the very best ends of economy, of virtue and morality, to say nothing of religion; but a man who feeds on nothing but these—how miserable and wretched he is! These are the whips and syllabubs of life. They are not the bread nor the meat. They are the confections of life. But ought a man to sit down and eat sugar-plums for his dinner, and nothing but sugar-plums? Libraries are now accessible on every side; and I am ashamed to see that there are hundreds and thousands of young men—and you know who they are, for many of you are they—who almost never go into them. You have not time? You have time for anything else that you are determined to have. Every young man has time to do what he wants to do. Where there is a will there is no trouble—not once in a thousand times. The trouble is the want of appetite; the want of manly inspiration; the absence of the feeling that ignorance is disgraceful, not to say criminal. The trouble is that you want to live in present pleasure; because you want to be happy to-day, to-morrow,

and next day. Pleasing sensations are more to you than substantial growth in manliness, in knowledge, in virtue, and in truth.

But all education does not come from reading, important as that is. Even if you should say that it is impossible for you to read (though you can read a great deal if you desire to; I do not believe for a moment that you cannot read: the fragments of your time, if they were saved, would enable you to accomplish a vast amount of reading) and if it were really impossible, a man's education might go on without books to a very considerable extent. God gave men eyes that they might see; and yet very few people see anything. I see people who walk from their house down to the ferry every day and back again, every day, week in and week out, month in and month out, but who never see anything, apparently. The most surprising things are right before them, and never excite an inquiry or a thought in them, nor lead to their acquiring one particle of knowledge. But ought a man to see the most striking phenomena of weather and not make some inquiry about it? Ought a man to see the Northern Lights dance at night merely as he would look at fireworks, and go into the house and simply say, "Yes, they were very fine, very fine?" Ought there not to be in you something that wants to know what is the cause, what is the theory, what is the philosophy of these things? Is there nobody that you can ask a question of?

A young man goes along the street. There is the curbstone. All he thinks is that it is the edge of the sidewalk. But where did that stone come from? Where is the quarry from which it was taken? What is the difference between the kinds of stone used? Some is white, and some is blue. One kind of stone is used for pavements, and other kinds for other purposes. What is the difference between them? What is the difference between brick and stone?

You pass through one street in which men are laying pavement of wood. Where did this wood come from? Why do they use pine rather than beech? What is the effect of saturating the wood in asphalt? You do not know. The only thing you observe is that men are at work there, that they are making a smooth road, and that it smells bad! Ought there not to be some inquisitiveness, some questioning about these things?

In another street men are putting down the Scrimshaw pavement. There is a good deal for a man to think about in that—a good deal for me to think about, at any rate. I like to stand and watch the workmen; and if they are intelligent, I like to question them. And an intelligent man likes to be questioned. I never saw a man that was doing anything well, who was not fit to be my schoolmaster, and who could not tell me something that I did not know. And there is nothing like an

ingenious youth that wants to learn, for asking questions. What was your tongue put into your head for? There are two rules about asking questions. Never ask a question when you can help it; and never avoid asking questions when you have first tried to answer them for yourself, and found that you cannot. Never ask anybody to untie a knot for you till you have exhausted your power and skill upon it. When you have satisfied yourself that you cannot do it, then you may ask somebody to do it for you.

You see men, after a snow-storm, distributing salt on the car-track. I say to you, "What is that for?" "Why," you say, "to melt the snow." "But how does the salt melt the snow?" "Well—it melts it!" It is certainly true that it does; but that is not a very intelligent answer. Ought you not to be able to explain such a thing as that?

Take plate glass. Where do these magnificent glasses come from that are four feet one way, and six feet the other, all in one solid sheet, and so pure that when you look through them you do not know that there is glass there? How is the glass made? Is it rolled, or cast, or blown? What is it made of? What are the materials which go into the composition of different kinds of glass? In what countries are they most facile in the manufacture of glass?

Take colors. What is color? What is this particular color? Men look at it, and say, "It is pretty, is it not?" That is all they have to say about it. Is that manly? Does such a course as that command your self-respect? You smile; and yet, when you smile do not you smile at yourselves? Do not you do the very things which I have been inveighing against?

I hold that if a man has eyes, and ears, and a tongue, and he chooses, he can find out something every day he lives. You ought not to go home at night without having learned something to put down in your journal, and something worth knowing. You have had a poor day if you have not reaped something. Sometimes the fisher comes back without a fin, and the hunter without a feather; but no man who is a hunter or fisher for knowledge ought to come back without his pouch or basket full every single night.

In crossing the ferry, I like to stand by the pilot (whom I find to be very gentlemanly) and talk with him; and the river is not broad enough, and the trip is not long enough, for the information that I can gain. And I frequently go down into the hull of the boat. I would not recommend you all to take such liberties; but I find in the engineer and in his machinery much to interest and instruct. I could talk with him all day, or all night, about the different kinds of engines and boilers; about the different principles on which they operate; about the different manufacturers; about the running of the boat in winter and

summer; about the life he leads down there; about his way of looking at things; about a thousand matters that he is familiar with, and I am not.

It is interesting to talk with the deck-man. How much he can tell you of people that go across the ferry at all the hours of the day—of those that go earliest in the morning, and those that go a little later, and those that go still later! How much he can tell you of how the different classes appear. There are a multitude of questions that you can ask him, and as many things that he can lecture you on, if you have a tongue to ask, and an ear to hear.

Life is full of sources and opportunities for acquiring information. There are facts concerning men, and animals, and vegetable growths, and manufacturing processes, and economies, thousands of them, which it is worth your while to acquaint yourself with. You could draw out volumes and volumes of these things if you would avail yourself of the opportunities which are constantly presented to you.

Not only ask questions, but when you have asked a question go and read about it. When you have seen something that has excited your curiosity, and you have asked a question about it and got some information, and made a minute of it, you are in just the right state to go to some library where there are encyclopedias, and ask for what you want. If you do not know what to ask for, hunt up some man that does, and get him to tell you. Pursue the thought till you have searched it out.

Do you suppose you could follow such a course as that for five or ten years and not be well educated? It is not necessary that a man should go to a college or an academy to be well instructed in a thousand things that it is well for a free, democratic citizen of America to know.

There used to be an impression that certain things belonged to certain classes. That has all passed away. One of the peculiar, though unexpected and indirect, results of democratic influences, is that professions are no longer close corporations. Once nobody was expected to know about mechanics except the mechanic, but now everybody is expected to know about them. Once the doctor was the repository of all the knowledge of health and disease in the community; but now every well-read householder ought to have a general knowledge of medicine. Once the lawyer knew all the law that was known; but now every well instructed business man has some considerable knowledge of law as it relates to his particular business—and he ought to have. Everybody has a right to know what anybody has a right to know. You have a right to steal everybody's trade, and to pick everybody's pockets of knowledge. You have a right to know what the doctor knows.

You have a right to know all that the judge knows—no, not *all*, but whatever things rightfully belong to the profession of a judge! You have a right to know anything that is becoming in a man and a citizen.

This leads me to say a word in respect to the company which men keep. You often hear men speak of bad company; and you are often warned against bad company; but there is a shade of thought different from that which I wish to urge upon you; namely, that while you do not attempt to get into company above your station in life, you should not let your vanity lead you to select inferiors for your companions, so that you can shine upon them. Pick your company from among those whom you are conscious are superior to you, and that can teach you something. It may perhaps pique you to be obliged to feel every day how inferior you are; but it will serve manliness in an eminent degree. Therefore let your friend be half a head taller than you are. Learn to look up for your company, and life will go well with you; but if you have to look down for your company, it will go ill with you. After all, it is this unconscious, incidental, sympathetic communication between mind and mind that works most powerful changes in taste and temperament, and that works in the way of knowledge. There is nothing that excites such electricity as mind rubbing on mind.

While pursuing your education—and your own thoughts will give a larger expansion to this matter than I have time to give it now—remember that it is not enough for you to be educated simply in knowledge. Because you are a citizen of no mean republic, and because you are men, it is right for every one of you to aim at refinement. By *refinement* I understand, comprehensively, the bringing to bear of reason and the imagination upon qualities and things in such a way that you see finer elements in them than otherwise you would see; finer than your senses see; finer than your common reason sees. Do not suppose that refinement belongs to any place, or to any class. I admit that a man is better helped to be refined if he has the advantages of refined society; if he belongs to certain professions in which refinement is current; or if he has certain lines of education. In other words, there is a greater facility for gaining refinement under these circumstances. But a man is not to be refined because he is a minister, nor because he is a lawyer, nor because he is a legislator, nor because he is an artist. He is to be refined because it is good for manhood to be refined. And it is just as good for manhood at the bottom as it is for manhood at the top. Are you a carpenter? Are you a mason? Are you a daylaborer? Do you drive a cart? Do you sweep the street? What do you do? Do you dig? Do you delve? You ought to be refined, not because of your trade, but because of

yourself. It is your manhood that needs refinement, and you have a right to it. It is not a thing, thank God, in our day and nation, that can be sequestered, and become the badge of any particular class. There is that inherent right, and there ought to be that expectation and endeavor clear down to the bottom of society. It belongs to everybody, in every calling. You may be genteel and courteous, you may have refined tastes, you may be a gentleman, though you are a mechanic; though you are the lowest of laborers. I see, not unfrequently, as fine specimens of gentlemanliness in the humbler walks of life, as I see in the higher. I have seen as true manliness, and as true ladylikeness, in humble servants, as I have seen anywhere.

I remember a poor colored man who earned his livelihood by sawing wood from house to house, and who was a real gentleman, Virginia bred. No governor was ever more truly polite than this poor old broken-backed sawyer. He was gentlemanly in speech, in manner, in gesture, in the whole attitude of his mind, by which he respected himself, and sought to deal courteously and refinedly with others. He was a *gentleman* in the true sense of that word.

There is no reason why a man should not be a gentleman if he stands at the forge, if he stands in the tannery by the vat, or if he stands in the shop by the tool-bench. There is no reason in the world why a man in the lower walks of life should not be a gentleman in manners, in speech, and in courtesy of thought and feeling. And I long to see the day when it shall not be deemed necessary for a man to have what is called "social position" in order to be refined and gentlemanly.

In this matter, do not overlook the importance of good manners. Good manners are not, of course, the same as virtues; but they stand very closely allied to virtues. There seems to be with many an impression that honesty and frankness require a species of gruffness and rudeness. The young—particularly those that are less cultured than they might have been—have the impression that there is a kind of manliness in being rude and blunt. There is not. It is a misfortune for a man to have rude manners, no matter where he is or who he is. A shipmaster on the sea, or a collier in the mine, is all the better if he has courteous manners—and he may have them. It lies with him to possess them. Social harshness has nothing in it that is beneficial, in any way of looking at it. In all things, remember that true politeness, and the source of true good manners, is a Christian, generous sympathy.

I think the thirteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians is the most perfect description of a gentleman that ever was written or thought of. It is Paul's representation of love. If you will substitute *politeness*

for *love*, you will see that this is so. Not that I would reduce love to politeness; but while that chapter, as it stands, is the most glorious chant that ever was chimed out of the belfrey of inspiration, it has a peculiar significance in this connection if we say *politeness* instead of *love*.

“Politeness suffereth long and is kind; politeness envieth not; politeness vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil”—and so to the end of the chapter.

The beginning of good manners, the beginning of politeness, is the inspiration of a true, pure, generous, loving heart. And that every man ought to have. And where a man has that, it will overflow, and show itself in his countenance, in his manners, in his dress, in everything about him.

Let me say to those whose way of life calls them into its harsher relations, that it is becoming in every young man to cultivate chivalry. There is chivalry yet in the world, though it does not exist in the same forms that it once did. There are opportunities for a man not only to have a high bearing, but to become the knight of the weak and those that are despoiled. Young man, always take the side of the weak. It may sometimes subject you to ridicule; but, after all, taking one thing with another through life, that man who is all the time looking to see which way the strong are going, and going with them, will, you may depend, split upon a rock. If you would be generous, bold, brave, and truly manly, side with the weak. Make that the rule. There may be exceptions, but you will find them out.

What opportunities are there? A great many. You are an apprentice. There comes into the shop a poor green country boy. The old hands are disposed to play tricks on him. He is homesick. They laugh at him. He is awkward. They jeer him. They have all manner of sport at his expense. They make him very wretched. Take his side. Take the side of the weak. Take the side of the unfriended. The brutality of breaking in apprentices in the shop is only equalled by the brutality of breaking in new students in college. Some of our colleges, which have in them young men that represent the best families in the country, show what brutality there is in human nature. In American society the grossest and most shameless outrages and indignities are perpetrated on those just entering upon college life or apprentice life, that appeal to every instinct of honor in their elders. And you ought to be ashamed of it. Every man ought to be ashamed of it. If there is anything that would make my blood boil, and fight quick, and take the side of the weak, it is such things as that. I do not counsel you to fight; but if you ever *do* fight, fight for those that are weaker than

you are—fight for the woman; fight for the child; fight for the poor old man. No matter if it is unpopular, take the weak side. Although it may be to your disadvantage for the hour, it will be to your advantage in the long run; for it will make you a man.

Do not despise etiquette. There are many who say, "I believe in kindness; I believe in downright good manners; but as to all this etiquette, these French manners, and so on, I do not believe in them." Of course, etiquette carried to excess is not desirable; but it is not a particular fault in American society. With the progress, the succession, of American ideas, we are disposed to throw away reverence for the aged, respect for our superiors, refinement of address. I was struck, when abroad, with the good manners which I saw, and could not help contrasting them with the want of good manners which I felt existed in my own country. There is a frank American address; but there is among us a want of courtesy and consideration. Life is made a great deal pleasanter, intercourse is made a great deal smoother, if men observe the little forms of propriety in life, which may not mean a great deal, but the absence of which is more felt than the presence of it. It is very little to say "Good morning," and yet, if every time you meet a friend or a neighbor you look him fair in the face and say, "Good morning, my friend," if it is morning, or "Good evening, my friend," if it is evening, is not the effect which is produced very different from that which is produced if when you meet a man you hardly look at him, and pass on? Is there not a difference in his feeling? Is there no difference in yours?

You go into a store. Does it make no difference in the long run whether you think, "This man is a trader, and I came to buy, and it is his business to give me my money's worth," and you say, "Here, have you got such an article," and pay for it, and go out; or whether you greet the man courteously, and in a respectful way ask for what you want, and give him the salutation as you leave?

In Paris, when I went into a store, the proprietor, who was sitting as I entered, rose, and bowed, and bade me good morning. I thought it was probably some acquaintance of mine that I did not recognize. I bowed, and waited for him to talk to me, but found that it was only the courtesy of the shop, and proceeded to make my little purchases. I was served with great kindness and consideration; and when I left, all that were in the store bade me good morning. I said to myself, "Singular! singular!" and I was ashamed that it did seem singular.

I am sure that such are not the manners of my country. Here men are frequently gruff, indifferent, and rude. Indeed, they often practice rudeness, or fall into habits of coarse, rough ways, on purpose. And the same fault to some extent characterizes our cousins of Britain. These

things are not well. They are neither refined nor becoming. The habit of acting as though you felt interested in other people's happiness, will by and by make you really feel interested in other people's happiness. And there are so few things which remain in the form of etiquette, that you cannot afford to despise and dispense with those few. This is particularly noticeable in the want of respect, not only for the aged and for superiors, but for women.

"But," you say, "Americans are celebrated, the world over, for their respect for women." No, they are not. Americans are famous for their respect for *ladies*, but not for *women*. If there comes into the cabin a very sweet and comely young lady, well dressed, there are a dozen persons who are more than willing to offer her a seat. If the car is crowded, and a stately maiden comes in and walks through, a great many men feel called to offer her a seat, because she is a *lady*. But when a poor Irish woman, poorly clad and weary, walks through the car or the cabin, nobody cares for her, because she is only a *woman*. If it were a *lady*, a seat would be offered her at once.

Now, I say that you ought to respect *womanhood*. No matter how a woman looks, she is of the same sex as your mother, as your sister, as your wife if you are married, and as your daughter if you have children. I feel to the very depth of my being, that womanhood itself, without regard to the frivolity of some, without regard to the stains of others, and without regard to age, is essentially to be respected, and that that man is less than a man who does not feel the instinct and the sentiment, and does not act according to it.

One word more. You should cultivate the habit of uniform generosity in all your intercourse in society. I do not say that it will bring you a reward that will be visible, and that you will see—though it will. The habit of taking care of others, of having consideration for the happiness of all that you go with, is wholesome. It would be a good thing if every time a young man starts upon a journey he should say to himself, "I mean to study to make other people happy, from the beginning of my journey to the end. I mean to train myself to improve every opportunity to do the thing that is right and proper for other people, and not for myself. If you had traveled as much as I have; if you had scrambled as much as I have for seats, and for the best ones—for bad manners are contagious; if you had traveled as much as I have on steamboats and seen how people that are most decorous at home, when the bell rings, and there are to be two tables, rush through the cabins and down stairs to their meals, you could appreciate the necessity for a reform in this matter. But I do not think you need go to steamboats or railway depots to be convinced of this. If you have been invited to fashionable parties, and seen what pigs

men make of themselves who are well fed at home; how they behave at the refreshment table; how they lose their self-respect, you do not need any further argument on this subject. It is owing to a want of consideration. It is not that they are so essentially selfish. They are persons that at other times really think of other people's welfare. They are persons that are actually kind and generous in their impulse. But I observe that under such circumstances men lose all their training, and forget themselves. And it is worth every young man's while to begin life with this thought: In all my intercourse, at home, in the steamboat, on the cars, wherever I am, I will never lose sight of the fact that it is my business to seek others' welfare as well as my own; to care for others, and not for myself alone. You will find that it is the law of God and humanity. You will find that it is the law of growth in true manliness.

I have picked up a few fragments of instruction. I believe that there could be more than twelve baskets full gathered of these loaves.

In closing, let me say, these things are not unimportant in a religious point of view. All these duties which I have enumerated imply self-denial, forethought, acting upon a higher principle than mere selfishness. These are but inflections of benevolence. They are a part of the general canon, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself." And he that is drilling himself in these minor particulars, is preparing himself to accept that higher law in all its fulness. And, on the other hand, he who accepts that higher law, and believes himself to have become a Christian, cannot afford to stand upon a principle. He must carry it out in its details, and fill up life with these exemplifications of this great law of love.

Nowhere else is this more beautifully taught than in that passage which I have read so often, which I have so often urged upon you, and which I would have you write in large letters above your desk—"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

May God, by the whole discipline of life, make you to grow in virtue, in truth, in purity, and in benevolence, and bring you at last where you shall need no more instruction, in the perfected land, through Christ, our Redeemer. *Amen.*

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Ever needing, and ever supplied by thy abundance, we have learned to look up to thee, O Lord, our God, in every time of need. We have learned to look more often in thanksgiving for mercies which descend before we ask them, than in supplication for mercies withheld. For thou knowest what things we have need of before we ask thee; and thou dost delay only that we may ask, and, asking, be blest. Thou art making our benefits gifts, and gifts of love; and they come not to our senses, to make us selfish, but to our honor and to our heart to make us full of generous and filial love and reverence. We thank thee that thou hast thus coupled our mercies with thy gifts, so that thou art sovereign; so that we look up for our good, and not downward, and are redeemed from the thrall and from the reign of the appetites and the passions. Seasoned are all these things with the thought of God, and with a humble dependence on thy power. For all the way in which thou hast led us, for all thy rebukes, for our instruction, for our suffering, for our hope and joy, for all the blessedness and for all the sadness of life, alike, we thank thee. This mingled mercy and discipline thou hast administered for our good.

Accept our confession of sin—that we have been so slow to learn; so hard to feel; so unwilling to change; so obdurate and worldly, stumbling in a plain way; learning little even by our downfall; requiring the same treatment over and over again. We have lain heavily on thine hands. Thou hast been patient with the burden; but we are ashamed that we have been so indocile; that we have been so slow to learn, and slower to practice that little which we have learned.

And now we desire, O Lord our God, to be stirred up by thy Spirit, and, for the time to come, to be more apprehensive; to be more vigilant; to be more sincerely earnest; to follow thee more patiently and more in the spirit of little children learning from parent lips.

Be pleased to sanctify to us all the administrations of thy providence. Grant that all things may work together for good to us. May we find ourselves in life filled with a sense of thy kindness and of thy mercy, so that from day to day there may be some argument of thanks. May our hearts, no longer selfish and proud, but rendered sensitive to the mercies of God, discern, even in the darkest day, something for thanks. And may this be the spirit of our life. May we constantly draw near to thee with grateful hearts. And we pray that thou wilt teach us, since we are pensioners of thy bounty, to be almoners of this joy which thou givest to us. And grant that we may distribute it to others. Freely have we received; freely may we give.

And we pray that thou wilt bless us in all the relations of life—in our households; in our friendships; as citizens in the discharge of secular duties. Going out and coming in, may we still be in the spirit of our Master. May we be patient. May we be faithful even in little things. May we learn to do the will of God. May we live in this life as expectants of a better life. May we discern here the seeds and beginnings of eternal growths. And we pray that we may never be weary in well doing, nor, having begun a Christian life, turn away from it to seek again the poor and beggarly elements of this world.

Bless all those that are teaching in our midst; all that are in the Sabbath school, whether teachers or scholars; all that are in Bible classes; all that go forth to carry the tidings of truth to those that are in iniquity. Inspire a benevolent disposition in every heart, and guide that disposition to all acts of kindness. May we learn to live together with more gentleness; with more joy; with more sincere, unaffected, and continuous unfoldings of the divine life.

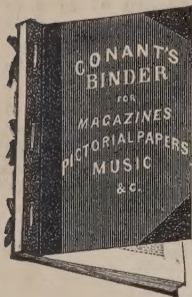
And we pray that thou wilt grant, as we journey toward the grave, that we may have assurance from day to day, so that when the hour comes, it shall not come bringing clouds and fears, but joy and peace that shall grow deeper and deeper till at last the disquietudes of this world shall melt into the everlasting peace of the world to come.

And we will give the praise of our salvation to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit evermore. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt bless the word which we have spoken. Grant that it may be a word in season, awakening thought, inspiring new resolution, and quickening endeavor. Save the young from themselves; from their tempters; from their ensnarers. We pray that there may be more and more inspiration of truth and nobleness and courage and purity; more and more desire for knowledge; more and more industry in acquiring it; more fellowship one with another. May we condescend to men of low estate. May we count others better than ourselves. May we love each other fervently and increasingly in all our relations one to another. Grant that we may be quickened by thy divine Spirit, not only so that we may be in love one with another, but so that all our earthly affections may be sanctified by thine. With this overruling love of God in our hearts, may we be kept from all inordinateness and impurity. And when thou hast done with us here below, bring us to thine own presence, and the joy of thine heavenly kingdom. And we will praise the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. *Amen*

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